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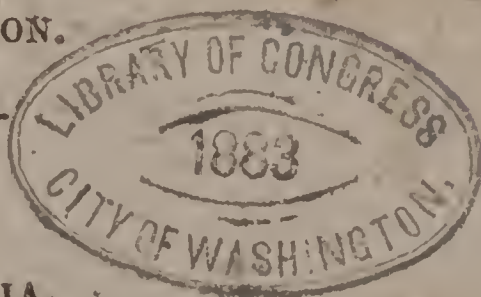
AN
ADDRESS
TO THE
CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES,
BUT MORE PARTICULARLY THOSE
OF THE
MIDDLE AND EASTERN STATES.

=====
BY JAMES SLOAN.
=====

Where Liberty dwells there is my country.

Franklin.

—❁—
THIRD EDITION.



PHILADELPHIA,
PRINTED OCTOBER 2,
1812.

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ADDRESS, &c.

Friends and Fellow-Citizens !

NOTHING short of an imperious sense of duty, could have brought again upon the public stage of action, one, whose advanced age had induced a pleasing hope, that his few remaining days might have been spent in walking gently and peacefully down his western hill, to the house appointed for all living ; and, more especially so, when the cause of this address, is the conduct of that political party, who, twelve years past, he exerted all his feeble powers to place at the helm of government, fondly hoping, that they, and their successors in office, would have fulfilled their promises, in promoting, to the utmost of their power, the liberty, prosperity, peace, and independence of these United States ; and continuing to them, the greatest of all earthly blessings, “ Peace with all nations—entangling alliances with none ”—But, alas ! how are the fond hopes and expectations of millions of the peaceful Citizens of this once happy land blasted, by a variety of oppressive measures, and finally a declaration of war against the only nation on the globe, who from her situation and naval power, appears able to raise an effective barrier against the colossal power of one, whose conduct evinces an insatiable thirst for universal domain !

Without impeaching the motives of those who have held the helm of government for five years past, I propose, in the following address, to state a few of the many facts that might be adduced, to shew, that the various restrictive measures that have been adopted within that period, have not only been ineffectual

as to answering the purposes proposed, but, in their effects, much more injurious to the morals, interest and prosperity of the Union, than that of the two great Belligerents—and, to top the climax of our sufferings, we are finally precipitated into a war, where there is nothing to hope, and much to fear! I repeat it, no rational ground to hope or expect any real benefit; but an absolute certainty of great loss—and a great probability of losing our independence, or, at least, that union and harmony that formerly subsisted in these United States.

1st. What hope have we of gain? The advocates of war say, Canada, and British merchant vessels taken by our privateers. To this I reply by a subsequent question—Is there a Christian, is there an honest, humane mind, is there a citizen of these United States, not wholly lost to a sense of justice, honour, or consistency of conduct, who will not, upon a moments reflection, turn from so nefarious a plan, with detestation and abhorrence? Did not those noble Patriots, who opposed the tyranny of England in the Revolutionary war, declare, that the end for which they risked their lives, and sealed their testimony with their blood, was to purchase lasting peace for them and their posterity? Did not they and their successors hold up this language to the world, that our motto was—"Peace with all nations, entangling alliances with none"—and, consequently, that we held all wars, but those only defensive, inadmissible under our just and peaceful government? Must this heaven-born language, "Peace on earth, and good will to men," which hath been measurably reduced to practice near thirty years, which appears to have drawn down upon us the blessings of a just and merciful God, insomuch that we have grown and flourished as willows by the water-courses; must, I say, this lovely, this Paradical scene, be wrested from us, against the will of a great majority of our experienced, wise, and virtuous citizens? Must our citizens be hired or compelled to leave their peaceful and useful occupations, and the most near and dear connexions in life, to learn the art of war, that thereby they may more expeditiously, and more certainly, murder their fellow-mortals, many of whom may be compelled against their will, to stand as marks for those horrid engines of death, which depraved mortals have invented to destroy the human species? Must others, tempted by the prospect of gain, be changed from honest and useful citizens into legalized robbers upon the highway of nations, where, as on land, if resistance be made, they proceed to murder the innocent, following their honest occupation, carrying the product of their labour to market, to feed the hungry, and clothe the naked? Forbid it, oh! thou most gracious and merciful Ruler of

the Universe !—And you, my dear Fellow-Citizens, I earnestly entreat; not only to say—Amen; but, before it is too late, use the peaceable and all-powerful means that our excellent Constitution hath put in your power to forbid it, and thereby restore the inestimable blessing of peace to our once happy land.

Having briefly shewn the immorality of the plan, I will proceed to state some plain and obvious facts, to shew the uncertainty of success—1st. As to taking Canada, were the Eastern States firmly united with the measure, there would be strong probability of success; but their decided opposition, which appears to strengthen daily, renders it highly probable, that if persisted in, the event will be doubtful, but certainly attended with the loss of much blood and treasure; and, if conquered, can only be held by a large military force, which must consequently be a great expense to the United States. 2d. Respecting gain by privateering—A moments reflection upon the present state of the navy of England, must convince every unprejudiced mind of the futility of that plan. I know the advocates of the war are attempting to deceive the people, by adducing the success of American privateers during the Revolutionary war, either ignorantly or wickedly omitting the entire dissimilarity of the case. 1st. In that war, the British armies had possession of several of our great sea-port towns, to which they were frequently transporting provisions, troops, and military stores, which afforded frequent opportunities of captures on our coasts—2d. Divers Islands which afforded convenient harbours for our privateers were then in possession of our allies; all of which are now in possession of England and her allies—and, 3d. Three powerful maritime nations, viz. France, Holland, and Spain, were united with us against England, one of whose fleets (France) menaced the Island of Great Britain with invasion and plunder, and actually compelled their main army to leave Philadelphia precipitately, to avoid the capture of their fleet in the Delaware; and, finally, another of their fleets blocked up the Bay of Chesapeake, whereby Cornwallis and his army were captured, which terminated the war: whereas the fleets of those nations are either annihilated, in alliance with England, or blockaded in their ports, leaving the navy of England completely mistress of both oceans and narrow seas, whereby she will be enabled to send convoys with her merchant vessels, sufficiently strong to prevent loss by privateers. The same reason will enable her, without fear of loss, or danger of capture, to plunder, and, if so disposed, to murder, burn and destroy the property of our citizens on our extensive, and, in many places, defenceless seaboard. From the foregoing brief view of the subject, I trust every candid, impartial mind

will be convinced, that my position is incontestably proved, that in viewing the certain and probable consequences of the present war, we have nothing to hope, but much to fear.

I will now state some important facts, to which I earnestly entreat the attention of my Fellow-Citizens, particularly those called Democratic Republicans, with whom I was united twelve years ago, to procure a change of men and measures, as the only means of preventing the destruction of our excellent Republican Government, and erecting on its ruins an aristocracy or monarchy, and acted with them as long as their measures were consistent with the interest of these United States; but, when they departed therefrom, and adopted measures injurious to the interest, peace, and prosperity of the Union, I opposed them; and consider myself in duty bound to state such facts as will incontestably prove, that the conduct of the said Democratic Republicans hath been, for five years past, more injurious to the interest, peace, and happiness of these United States, and finally infinitely more dangerous to our liberty and independence, than the conduct of the supporters of that administration, which we so strenuously and successfully opposed.

Of the numerous causes of complaint then made, the following were considered the most oppressive, and dangerous to the liberties of the people—Congress debating with closed doors—passing a law for raising 10,000 men—partiality in favour of England—misapplication of public money, and bitter invectives against France, with circulation of hand-bills, calculated to prepare the minds of the people for war with that nation—an alien and sedition law, the former to expel aliens, the latter to prevent an investigation of their conduct—oppressive taxes; the principal of which were stamp tax, excise, salt, refined sugar, riding carriages, and finally a direct tax on houses and land, with a loan for 8,000,000 of dollars. Here I beg the attention of my Fellow Citizens, to contrast this conduct with that under which we have suffered for five years past. 1st. Debating with closed doors much more frequent; and, what is infinitely more alarming, the last session, the right of the minority to debate, and discharge their duty to their constituents, has been cut off by the previous question, in the hands of an overwhelming majority. 2d. Instead of a law for raising 10,000 men, when the United States army were about 3,000, the last session, when they were about 10,000, a law passed for raising 25,000—Hence, instead of an army of 13,000, which so greatly alarmed the people under the administration of John Adams, under James Madison we have 25,000. 3d. Respecting partiality in favour of France, and stren-

ous exertion to excite war with England—Of the many facts that might be adduced, the fifty thousand dollars paid the infamous traitor John Henry, and sending him to France in a national armed vessel to prevent investigation, so far surpasses any partiality, or misapplication of public money, that appeared during the administration of John Adams, as to render other facts needless, that alone being sufficient to excite detestation and abhorrence in every virtuous mind. Whereas many of the supporters of the present ruinous measures, are deceiving their uninformed and unsuspecting Fellow-Citizens, by positive declarations, that the foregoing is not a fact, but a Federal electioneering lie; for the information of those who have been, or may be so easily imposed upon, I adduce an extract of a letter of Edwin Gray to his Constitutents, upon that most important subject, as follows—“The communication made by Mr. Madison to congress, in relation to a certain John Henry, an agent of the British Government, has excited some interest in the public mind, principally on account of the sum of fifty thousand dollars, paid to him by Mr. Madison. The payment of that sum to Henry being doubted by many, I deem it proper, in justice to all honest men who may entertain a doubt on the subject, to assert, that it is a positive fact, which could not be denied by the secretary of State, when lately examined by a committee of the senate.” He then proceeds to censure severely such unconstitutional and base conduct, and concludes with the following words—“All this demonstrates a degree of folly so monstrous, that I can conceive nothing more revous or alarming.” With the aforesaid Edwin Gray I was intimately acquainted, during the six sessions of Congress, of which I was a member, and considered him as firm an independent democratic Republican as any in that House, which was his liberal character, until the evident departure of the dominant party from genuine Republican principles, which became too notorious to be concealed from public view, in the session of 1807-8 when his honesty compelled him (and divers other Democratic Republicans) to oppose the commencement of those unconstitutional, impolitic, and ruinous measures, that hath eventually reduced these United States to the present deplorable situation. Those malignant creatures, who are determined to continue sacrificing the interest, peace, and happiness of the Union, at the shrine of party, political rage, it is altogether useless to state even the evident facts; but to the real friends of their country, who honestly inquiring after truth, the foregoing statement will furnish conclusive evidence, more especially when they are informed that the aforesaid Gray is a native of Virginia, his distant not far distant from the Federal City, and that notwithstanding the violent opposition of time-serving Court-Sycophants, his

unshaken integrity hath so endeared him to his constituents, that he hath been fourteen years elected their representative. If there be any who after reading the above statement of facts, persist in denying the truth, let such remember that by so doing, they place our Executive in a most pusillanimous and despicable point of view, altogether unfit to preside over a great, free, and enlightened people: I mean, by suffering a member of Congress, at the seat of government, to publish as a fact, an act of the President, which if true, must not barely alienate the affections of the people from him, but fill every honest mind with detestation and abhorrence.

Although the various taxes beforementioned are not yet laid, they have been brought before the house, postponed to next sitting, and must inevitably be then laid if the war is continued. A law has passed and a loan opened for eleven millions of dollars, and for issuing Treasury notes to the amount of five millions of dollars—a most alarming and dangerous plan, by which the United States may be involved in a debt which they will never be able to discharge. Hence it appears that every oppressive measure complained of under John Adams's administration is revived, or must shortly be, in case the war continues, except the Alien and Sedition laws, for which there appear two substitutes infinitely more dangerous, viz. issuing Treasury Notes; and, instead of sending Aliens away, permitting them effectually to destroy investigation of the conduct of our public servants, freedom of speech and of the press, by destroying the latter, and inhumanly murdering some of those who had exercised their unalienable right, in the former—witness the late riots in Baltimore—equalled only by the horrid murders of Robespierre in France; and a similar disposition evident in divers other places; by the advocates of the present ruinous measures.

I will now proceed to state some facts to prove, that the restrictive measures that have been adopted for five years past, have instead of proving beneficial to the United States, been altogether the reverse, by strengthening the power of England, and weakening our own. 1st. Prohibiting a lucrative trade to St. Domingo; and secondly, Laying an Embargo in the session of 1807-8, which continued more than fifteen months, and threw both the direct and carrying trade principally into the hands of English merchants, which raised their shipping fifty per cent; whilst ours were either rotting in our harbours, or compelled by necessity, to carry on what our impolitic and oppressive laws termed an illicit trade. In like manner many of our brave seamen, deprived of employment, were compelled by necessity to

seek it in British vessels ; by which many more were forced from the service of their country than by impressment. Thus was our ship-carpenters deprived of employment ; our farmers in the old and improved parts of the country, deprived of the means of paying their rents, and other contracts, for want of a market for the product of their labour ; whilst various articles which custom and habit had rendered necessities of life, were increased in price fifty to a hundred per cent—the hopes of the settlers of our extensive western country blasted, by the means of paying for their land by the product of their labour being cut off : hence numerous petitions to Congress for longer time, which they were under the necessity of granting, and thereby suspending a considerable portion of the annual revenue. To give, in detail, a list of all the impolitic, and evidently partial, and oppressive measures, that have been adopted since the attempt to pass a Court Martial Law in the session of 1806-7, would exceed the bounds of this address, in which I mean to be as brief as possible consistent with my duty.

I shall therefore in general terms say, that since that period, the administration and its supporters (however pure their motives may have been) have adopted measures altogether inconsistent with the interest, peace, and happiness of these United States ; that divers of those measures have operated partially, and therefore unjustly, upon different sections of the Union ; the restrictions upon trade being rather a suspension of profit to the rich planters in the Southern States than a prohibition : whereas in the maritime, Middle, and Eastern States, it not only stops their growth and prosperity, but deprives many thousands of their citizens of the means of procuring their bread. I cannot in justice here omit mentioning the partial operation of the late embargo, laid at a season of the year when the rivers of the Middle and Eastern States were frozen ; whilst the Southern States, who usually thresh their wheat in the field, and other produce being ready for market, were thereby enabled to export great quantities previous to said embargo. Upon the whole, I consider the late measures, completed by a declaration of war against England, as unjust and oppressive as the tyranny of the King of Egypt to the Jews, who, after depriving them of part of the means to make brick, viz. straw, demanded of them the full toil. Thus hath the aforesaid restrictive measures deprived these United States of the principal means of carrying on a war, I mean its revenue, and with an exhausted treasury, our infatuated rulers have rushed into war, commanding the people to support it without the means !

Here it may be proper to inform my fellow-citizens of the state of our funds previous to the first embargo, which, not having a statement before me, I must do from memory, which, if correct, was upwards of seventeen millions of dollars, and had there been no impolitic restrictive measures adopted by our rulers, to the present time, would doubtless have exceeded twenty millions, which with proper economy, would have discharged the greatest part of our national debt, and placed us in a proper situation to meet war, in case that should prove inevitable, with a full treasury, and a united people, which would have presented so formidable a phalanx to an invading foe, as to cause them speedily to repent of their temerity—but oh, how dreadful a contrast does the state of our treasury present, and the situation in which young and inexperienced counsellors, dandled in the lap of Pleasure, and fed at the table of Luxury, like those whose counsel to Rehoboam in days of old, deprived him of ten out of twelve tribes, or those of a recent date, who, in conjunction with the young Amazonian Queen of Prussia, prevailed upon the King to risque a battle with Bonaparte, contrary to the advice of his old experienced officers. The consequence proved fatal. In a few hours reduced that once powerful kingdom, that had held the balance of power in Europe, to a state of perfect vassalage, to that tyrant into whose scale our rulers have most impolitically and dangerously thrown our weight! The foregoing, aided by foreigners, divers of them editors of newspapers, of so vindictive a disposition, that they would sacrifice the interest, peace, and happiness of the Union, to gratify their hatred to a nation that had injured them or their friends, have forced the United States into the present war; contrary to the counsel of age and experience; which hath uniformly been to refrain from interfering either directly or indirectly with the wars of any European power.

Whether there is at present, or any future prospect of an alliance with France, I know not; but this is a self-evident fact, that by declaring war against England, it as effectually aids and assists France, to destroy that power, as if our situation was such, that our American army and that of France, were united together in one field of battle.

Here my dear fellow-citizens, let me beg your attention to some most important questions. Is not the British naval power the only apparent or visible barrier against the ambitious designs of Bonaparte, which is evidently to render subservient to his will all the nations of the earth? This question answered in the affirmative (which none can contradict) opens the way to a

second, and that to a third. Is not the naval power of England open to the view, and consequently permitted by that Almighty Power that rules in heaven, and doeth whatsoever it sees meet in the kingdoms of the earth? If so, have we not cause to fear that by rushing into the present war, we may be found fighting against God, and liable to the fate of one formerly (Josiah, king of Judah) who having for a time been blessed with peace and plenty, became exalted in his mind, slighting those inestimable blessings, he determined to fight with a King, who strove to avoid it by all honourable means in his power? Like Great Britain, who hath done less injury, and appeared more amicably disposed for several years past before war was declared, than she hath done since we were an independent nation: this the treatment of our vessels and seamen, and the conduct of her late minister incontestably proves.

I might here add, a number of laws passed, and attempted to be passed, more dangerous in their effects, and more oppressive and tyrannical than any passed during the administration of John Adams; but I trust the facts already stated, are sufficient to convince every honest impartial mind, that the inestimable blessing of peace, union, and prosperity, can only be restored by a change of measures, which can only be effected by a change of men. To effect this most desirable purpose, it is necessary for you my fellow citizens of the Middle and Eastern States, to assume your proper station, exercise those unalienable rights which our excellent constitution secures to all, I mean a majority of free citizens, to choose our public servants, and remove them as soon as they betray the trust reposed in them. Reject with the contempt they deserve those Federal City caucuses, those works of darkness, where minorities (many of whom have been basking in the sunshine of Executive patronage, enjoying, or expecting in case of re-election, places of profit or honour, for them or their friends) in secret conclave assume a power never delegated to them, that of dictating to the Union who should be our next President. This I know to be the case, through the blind infatuation produced by political party virulence. The Middle and Eastern States, Democratic Republicans, have been induced to vote in those caucuses with the Southern, contrary both to the interest of their constituents, and their own judgment and inclination, attempting to cover their breach of trust and injustice, under the specious pretext of unity, to prevent the Federalists from obtaining their former power. This unjust conduct placed James Madison in the presidential chair, and retained the seat of government in a place calculated to carry on such intrigues, and if not removed,

will ere long deprive the Middle and Eastern States of their liberty and independence !—I am bold to say, that had an eastern President been chosen last election, and the seat of government removed to Philadelphia, where the Representatives of the people could have had correct information of the opinion of their constituents, and legislated publicly before a free people, procuring their bread by some useful occupation ; instead of secretly with closed doors, surrounded by slaves and slave holders, and a set of war hawks, and other idle drones ; who determined to counteract the will of their Creator in procuring their bread by the sweat of their brows, are perpetually striving to produce war, or any other evil change, that may increase offices, and thereby enable them to live in pride and luxury, upon the product of the labour, of honest, industrious, and virtuous citizens. I am fully convinced, had that been the case, that instead of the deplorable situation to which we are reduced, our public debt would have been principally discharged, and a surplus in our treasury to have applied to the improvement of canals, and roads, whereby our citizens would have been united together and the inestimable blessing of peace, love, and harmony, would have smiled on our land !

Before I conclude, let me again my dear fellow citizens, remind you of the real cause that hath produced our present ever-to-be lamented, and most deplorable situation ; which will consequently discover the only certain remedy—the cause is a contravention of the just principle of our Constitution, that a majority shall rule. In contradiction of this genuine republican principle, a minority hath, for at least five years past ruled the destinies of this great nation : and what hath greatly increased and aggravated the evil is, that the local situation, manners, habits, and customs, of that minority, renders them altogether improper, and unequal to the task of governing a great, free, and enlightened, agricultural and commercial people. The minority alluded to are those States south-west of the State of Delaware, whose electors in the ensuing election for President (exclusive of Orleans, not yet organized) will be ninety : whereas, the Middle and Eastern States have one hundred and twenty-five, giving a majority of thirty five, which in justice ought to be fifty-five, because all least twenty of the ninety before mentioned, are upon the population of slaves, thus increasing the power of the oppressors upon the sufferings of the oppressed ! But perhaps some may query how a minority can rule, where, a plurality of votes decide the question ? I answer by assigning two facts within my knowledge : 1st. The weight of Executive influence ; and, 2d. The

virulence of party politics beforementioned. At the shrine of these two political dæmons have I beheld with sorrow and indignation, the interest of the Middle and Eastern States sacrificed, and finally, the lovely smiles, the choicest, the most inestimable of all earthly blessings, peace, rent from us against the will of a great majority of our citizens; and replaced by the greatest of all earthly curses, that inhuman horrible monster, the infernal fiend of *War*!

Having pointed out the cause of the sufferings of far the greater part of the industrious, and, therefore, the most useful citizens of these United States, it remains to point out the remedy; which is so plain, and easy to be understood, that it need only be mentioned to carry conviction, and meet the approbation of every honest, impartial mind. Let us evince by our conduct, that we are not barely nominal, but real disciples of the Prince of Peace; and governed by his spirit, are determined, in future, to lay aside party political enmity, and unite as a band of brothers, to use jointly the peaceable means which our Constitution hath secured to us, to remove the present, and prevent future evils of greater magnitude. I mean by the Middle and Eastern States (who, as hath been shewn, are a great majority) uniting together at the ensuing election, to place in the Presidential Chair, DEWITT CLINTON, of the State of New-York; whose local situation, and education in the genuine principles of liberty, must consequently render him more suitable to preside over a great, industrious, free, and enlightened people, than one, whose education and local situation hath had a tendency to bias the mind in favour of that anti-christian, tyrannical, and inhuman principle of slavery of the human species, contrary to that heaven-born language contained in our Declaration of Independence—"We hold this truth to be self-evident, that God hath created all men equal, and endowed them with certain unalienable rights, amongst which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

If the present President should be re-elected, it is morally certain, that war, with all its consequent evils, will be continued, to the great injury and probable ruin of these United States;—but if DEWITT CLINTON should be elected, peace upon honorable terms will be restored; commerce, on which depends the prosperity of the Middle and Eastern States, encouraged and supported; genuine Republican principles reduced to practice, by a majority of free citizens bearing rule, which would restore to our Government its former strength and energy, supported by the confidence and love of the people.

The foregoing statement of facts, with the inevitable attendant consequences that hath already brought these United States to the brink of ruin, and, if persisted in, must shortly complete the dreadful scene, and exhibit to the world a more horrid tragedy than any recorded in history ; that of the fairest and most hopeful fabric of human wisdom and virtue—the hope, the wonder and delight of the virtuous, the wise, and the good of all nations, laid in ruins, by the administration being placed in the hands of those, who pretend to be friends to liberty and the equal rights of man, but whose conduct prove them to be unjust, tyrannical oppressors of the human species ! I earnestly recommend to the serious attention of all, but more particularly the citizens of the Middle and Eastern States, who, at the ensuing election, will have it in their power to determine, whether their interest, rights and liberties, which, for five years past hath been sacrificed to party political rage ; whether the reins of Government shall remain in the hands of pretended republicans, but whose conduct pollutes the name ; whether those unjust, oppressive, unconstitutional, and tyrannical measures, which, as before mentioned, hath brought this nation to the brink of ruin, with the additional horrors of war, shall be continued ; or whether, by uniting together as a band of brothers, determined to revive and cherish the sacred flame of liberty, we shall restore the inestimable blessing of peace, attended with love and harmony amongst the citizens of our beloved country. That the God of peace, mercy and truth, may incline your hearts to the latter, is the fervent prayer of your aged and ever affectionate Fellow-Citizen,

JAMES SLOAN.

P. S. Since the foregoing Address was penned, the account of the capture of Gen. Hull, and his Army, has been published, which is such an indubitable proof of either the ignorance or wickedness, or both, of those who have rushed into a war, without the wisdom or means to carry it on to effect, that it needs no explanation or comment to inform or convince every honest and real friend to his country, that it can only be saved from total ruin, by a speedy change of men and measures.

Sept. 7, 1812.

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